



A STUDY ON ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ODL LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BURDWAN UNIVERSITY, WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we talk about the economic benefits of higher education. It offers economic advantages because it efficiently trains people to take on work in a variety of areas. Higher education is a sign of having a high degree of knowledge and skills, which helps produce work of higher quality and, as a result, earn more money. Education is a worthwhile endeavor that has significant effects on both individuals and civilizations. This paper examines the economic benefits of ODL learners of Burdwan University in the state of West Bengal. The study is based on descriptive survey and the survey conducted on pass out ODL learners of Burdwan University. The study explores on the monetary benefits of ODL learners including employment, earning, job promotion, earning opportunities. Result shows economic Benefit of male ODL learners is slightly higher than the Female ODL Learners. Present study shows similarity of economic benefits derived by rural and urban female ODL learners.

KEYWORDS: Development, Education, Economic benefits, Open and Distance Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Education is currently geared towards promoting the principles of a competitive, metropolitan consumer society (Patil 2012). It plays an important role in a country's socioeconomic progress. Education contributes to the growth of human capital and influences economic development. The focus on the education sector and widespread access to higher education significantly contributed to lowering inequalities within nations. Generally completing higher education offering high job chances for people. Higher Education promotes economic development and growth. It reduces poverty, fostering a stable social and political environment that encourages investment. Normally, Higher education helps the workforce becomes more socially conscious, forcefulness, and cultivable. (Afzal et al., 2010). One of the main goals of higher educational institutions is to impart quality education, skills among for individuals their development (Fasasi 2011). Adequate and necessary skills is required for economic progress of the country. It is true that many of developing nations were struggling in their economic progress due to lack of abilities and expertise in a variety of sectors (Berg, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to construct an educational development mechanism that would provide more equal access and opportunities among the people for their betterment.

India's literacy rate has increased astronomically since it gained independence. As a result, there has been a significant increase in enrolment at all levels of education, including conventional and distance education mode. Development in the country's educational infrastructure and related fields during the past 20 to 30 years has also positively impacted students' decisions to pursue higher education. Open and distance learning was started in West Bengal after the establishment of a study Centre in Kolkata, and later a Regional Centre of the Indira Gandhi National Open University at Bikash Bhaban in Salt Lake. Later other universities started distance mode education after developed the Directorate of Distance Education (DDE) among their own universities. The University of Burdwan one of them. In 1994 Directorate of Distance Education (DDE) was

established as per the instructions of the Distance Education Council (Burdwan University Distance Education, n.d). Directorate of Distance Education (DDE) is now known as Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE).

Review of literature

One of the key contributing aspects of human capital is education. Many studies showed that developed countries can't achieved economic growth without the development of human capital. (Javed et al. 2008). The knowledge growth has created strong new incentives for people to increase their skills and capacities through education (Gorur, 2015).). The lack of human capital in poor countries may be the cause of the higher returns to education in those nations (Jimenez & Patrinos, 2008). Educated and skill labour has better Opportunities for better jobs and higher earnings (Berg, 2008). Higher education is intended to prepare people for the workforce for their development for the future (Sun, 2012). Education has an impact on the business world with its effects on the workforce (Gropello, 2011). Economists and educationalists have widely acknowledged the direct financial returns of education (Becker & Lewis 1992).

Significance of the Study

A nation needs both physical and human capitals to prosper economically. The physical capital of the nation is animated by the human capital, which functions as its soul. For the sustainable economic development knowledgeable and skill full human resources are necessary (Javed et al, 2008) and this ability can be achieved from better higher education system (Afzal et al, 2010). By increasing individual productivity and efficiency higher education plays a crucial part in the growth of individuals, developing them into competent laborers to establish a solid base for the country's economic growth (Memon, 2007). Higher education helps individuals to acquire employment capacity for their betterment. Universities must provide complete and comprehensive educational programs for their students to find work in order to achieve their betterment. Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE) of Burdwan University come under the higher education system of West

Bengal state and provides better knowledge and skills to the learners for their upcoming future. So, it is very much necessary to see what types of monetary benefits did they received after completion their course.

Objectives:

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To study the economic benefits of ODL Learners of Burdwan University.
2. To examine the economic benefits of male and female ODL learners of Burdwan University.
3. To compare the economic benefits of ODL learners in urban and rural areas of Burdwan University.

Hypothesis:

H_1 : There exist no significant differences regarding economic benefits among male and female ODL learners of Burdwan University.

H_2 : There exist no significant differences regarding economic benefits of ODL learners of Burdwan University residing at urban and rural areas.

H_3 : There exist no significant differences regarding economic benefits of female ODL learners of Burdwan University residing at urban and rural areas

Delimitation of the study:

The study is restricting to Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE) Burdwan University in the state of West Bengal with the background of higher education system only within the completion of post graduate degree in the subjects of mathematics and English in the academic year 2016.

Sample: 120 ODL Learners of Burdwan University comprising of 60 male and 60 female having the subject either English or Mathematics in Master's degree level are residing at either urban or rural areas have been considered for the study.

Data source and methodology:

For the present study data were collected from the Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE), Burdwan University in the state of West Bengal. Present study is followed by the quantitative approach with the help of descriptive survey method in nature. The data were collected through questionnaire which has been standardized through test-retest method of reliability and this value estimated as $r = .70$

Data Analysis and Findings:

The Analysis and interpretation of the present study are discussed below according to the objectives and hypothesis.

Measures	Gender		Locality		Stream	
	M	F	Urban	Rural	Arts (Eng)	Science (Math)
N	60	60	46	74	67	53
Percentage	50	50	38.33	61.67	55.83	44.17

Table -1: Demographic Profile of Sample

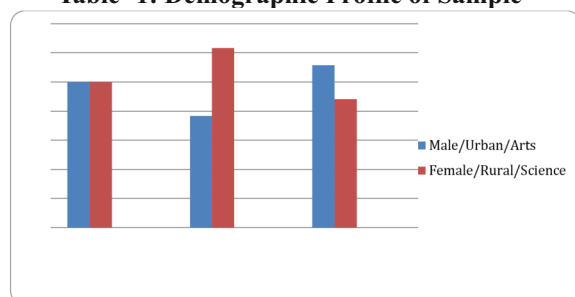


Fig-1: Percentage of ODL Learners with respect to Gender, Locality and Stream

Table - 1:

(As per Gender) shows that total numbers of ODL learners are 120 whereas male learners as well as female learners both are 60.

(As per Locality) shows that total respondents (120) are divided into two groups like rural and urban respectively. The numbers of ODL learners residing at urban areas are 46 and ODL learners residing at rural areas are 74 respectively.

(As per Stream) shows that the numbers of ODL learners coming from arts stream are 67 and the numbers of ODL learners coming from science stream are 53 respectively.

Variables	Economic Benefit (EB)		Economic Benefit (EB)	
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Max	73	72	73	71
Min	57	59	59	57
Mean	65.85	63.82	64.9	64.8
SD	4.51	4.48	4.41	4.73
Range	Low:15 High:75	Low:15 High:75	Low:15 High:75	Low:15 High:75

Table - 2: Comparing Maximum, Minimum values, Mean, SD and Range values of the variables Economic Benefit (EB) with respect to Gender and Locality

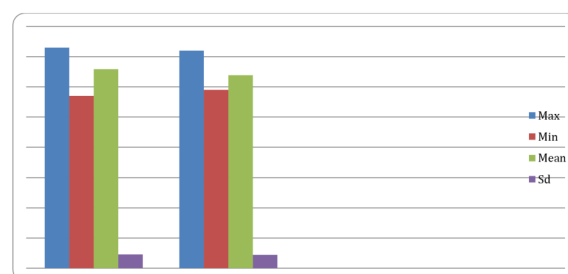


Fig-2: Maximum, Minimum values, Mean, SD and Range values of the Economic Benefit (EB) of Male and Female ODL Learners

From Table – 2, it has been seen that the Maximum, Minimum, Mean and Sd value are 73, 57, 65.85 and 4.51 respectively for male ODL Learners (60) regarding the variable Economic Benefit after passing the ODL Course where as the Maximum, Minimum, Mean and Sd value are 72, 59, 63.82 and 4.48 respectively for female ODL Learners (60).

According to the mean value of ODL Learners under male and female categories, the level of Economic Benefit of male ODL Learners (60) is slightly higher than the level of Economic Benefit of Female ODL Learners (60).

Variables	Male		Female		df	t-value	Critical Value of t	Decision	Conclusion
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD					
Economic Benefit (EB) of ODL Learners of BU	65.85	4.51	63.82	4.48	118	2.48	$t_{0.01} = 2.58$ $t_{0.05} = 1.96$	$P < 0.05$	Significant diff. exists Null Hypo. rejected

Table-3: Economic Benefit (EB) of Male and Female ODL Learners of BU

Table-3 depicts that 't'-value of two set of data in gender variation (male and female ODL Learners of BU) regarding the variable Economic Benefit (EB) is 2.48 which is significant at 0.05 level. So, null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted that means there exists significant difference between male and female ODL Learners of BU related to Economic Benefit (EB). By considering the mean and sd value of both gender regarding the variable Economic Benefit (EB), it can be said that the level of Economic Benefit (EB) of male ODL Learners of BU is slightly better than the level of Economic Benefit (EB) of female ODL Learners of BU.

Variables	Urban		Rural		df	t-value	Critical Value of t	Decision	Conclusion
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD					
Economic Benefit (EB) of ODL Learners of BU	64.9	4.41	64.8	4.73	118	0.12	$t_{0.01} = 2.58$ $t_{0.05} = 1.96$	$P > 0.01$	No Significant diff. exists Null Hypo. accepted

Table-4: Economic Benefit (EB) of ODL Learners of BU Residing at Urban and Rural Areas

Table-4 depicts that 't'-value of two set of data in locality variation (ODL Learners of BU residing at urban and rural areas) regarding the variable Economic Benefit (EB) is 0.12 which is significant at 0.01 level. So, null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected that means there exists no significant difference between ODL Learners of BU residing at urban and rural areas related to Economic Benefit (EB). By considering the mean and sd value of both cases regarding the variable Economic Benefit (EB), it can be said that the level of Economic Benefit (EB) of ODL Learners of BU residing at urban as well as rural areas are almost equal.

Variables	Urban		Rural		df	t-value	Critical Value of t	Decision	Conclusion
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD					
Economic Benefit (EB) of Female ODL Learners of BU	64.6	4.74	64.8	4.79	58	0.16	$t_{0.01} = 2.390$ $t_{0.05} = 1.671$	$P > 0.05$	No Significant diff. exists Null Hypo. accepted

Table-5 depicts that 't'-value of two set of data in locality variation (Female ODL Learners of BU residing at urban and rural areas) regarding the variable Economic Benefit (EB) is 0.16 which is significant at 0.05 level. So, null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected that means there exists no significant difference between Female ODL Learners of BU residing at urban and rural areas related to Economic Benefit (EB). By considering the mean and sd value of both cases regarding the variable Economic Benefit (EB), it can be said that the level of Economic Benefit (EB) of Female ODL Learners of BU residing at urban as well as rural areas are almost equal as they have utilized the available opportunities in a similar manner.

CONCLUSION

According to Table: 1, we see that rural male and female learner's dominant regarding the urban male and female ODL learners because urban male and female responses are lower than rural male and female ODL learners. Table two and three prove that male Learners are slightly better in the level of economic benefit rather than female ODL learners because their 't' value is 2.48 and significant level is 0.05. Table four indicates 't'-value is 0.12 which is insignificant at 0.01 level regarding the economic benefits of urban and rural ODL learners. That means there is no significant difference regarding economic benefit of ODL learners of Burdwan University residing at urban and rural areas. Table five shows the similarities among rural and urban ODL female learners and accepted null hypothesis which indicates that both urban and rural Female learners enjoyed same economic benefits in an almost same manner.

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